

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A retractable and self-orienting card holder comprising:
  - a) a housing with a circular cavity, having a broad-faced top and bottom, and a side with a tape-orienting slot therein;
  - b) a longitudinally flexible and laterally stiff tape coiled within the cavity and passing through said slot, said tape having a central end affixed within the housing and a peripheral end external to the housing, and said tape having a cross-sectional long and short axis and dimensioned to pass snugly through the slot;
  - c) a means for attaching a card having a broad card face to the peripheral tape end which maintains a fixed orientation of the card to the tape; and,
  - d) a coil spring with a first end affixed to the housing a second end affixed to the tape such that the spring loads when the tape is withdrawn from the housing and dissipates as the tape withdraws into the housing.
2. The card holder of Claim 1 in which the card face is held substantially parallel with the housing face.
3. The card holder of Claim 2 in which the tape is twisted by a series of slots within the housing and exiting the housing with the long axis of the tape substantially parallel to the housing face.
4. A retractable and self-orienting card holder comprising:
  - a) a housing with a flat circular cavity, having a broad-faced top and bottom, and a side with a tape-orienting slot therein;
  - b) a circular rotatable spool fitted within the circular cavity, said spool having a circumference track and a central core adapted to accommodate a coiled spring;
  - c) a longitudinally flexible and laterally stiff tape coiled upon the track of the spool and passing through said slot, said tape having a central end affixed to the spool and a peripheral end external to the housing, said tape having a cross-sectional long and short axis and dimensioned to pass snugly through the slot;
  - d) a means for attaching a card having a broad card face to the peripheral tape end which maintains a fixed orientation of the card to the tape; and,
  - e) a coil spring with first and second ends located within the central core of the spool, the first end affixed to the housing and the second end affixed to the spool

such that the spring loads when the tape is withdrawn from the housing and dissipates as the tape withdraws into the housing.

5. The card holder of Claim 4 in which the card face is held substantially parallel with the housing face.
6. The card holder of Claim 5 in which the tape is twisted by a series of slots within the housing and exiting the housing with the long axis of the tape substantially parallel to the housing face.